

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROGER WILLIAMS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Madam Speaker, due to President Biden's failure to address the crisis at the southern border, I was not present in the House and unable to vote on June 30, 2021.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 197.

IN RECOGNITION OF ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ON ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize St. Luke's Episcopal Church on the 150th anniversary of its first service at its edifice on Wyoming Avenue in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The occasion will be celebrated with a service and open house on Friday, July 2, 2021.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church was incorporated at its initial location on Penn Avenue in Scranton, Pennsylvania in 1852. Between 1850 and 1860, the city rapidly expanded and increased in population, and a larger building was needed to accommodate the faithful who gathered each week to worship. The Lackawanna Iron and Coal Company donated two lots in the 200 block of Wyoming Avenue for the new church. On July 5, 1866, the parish broke ground on its new building designed by top ecclesiastical architects Richard Upjohn and his son Richard Michell Upjohn in the Victorian Gothic style.

On July 2, 1871, the St. Luke's Rector, the Reverend Able Augustus Marple officiated the first service with the Right Reverend William Bacon Stevens, the Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, delivering a sermon titled "the Lord in his Holy Temple." The bishop administered the rite of confirmation during a second service that day. Congregants were in awe of the beauty of the new church, calling it "an ornament to the city."

An architectural marvel, the church has been a significant structure in the city's skyline for the past 150 years, towering above Wyoming Avenue in the heart of downtown. It has undergone several renovations throughout its history. In 1905, the Jermyn family gifted a new altar and reredos, improvements to the chancel, a new baptistry, and new decor in the nave in honor of vestryman John Jermyn. The altar, reredos, and window design were done by Louis Comfort Tiffany of Tiffany Studios in New York.

In 1898, Mary Throop Phelps funded the construction of the adjacent parish house in

memory of her parents, Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin Throop. The Throop Memorial Parish House followed the national tradition of Episcopal parishes dedicating a parish house to serve the community. St. Luke's provided a summer home for women and children, and under the direction of the then-rector Rogers Israel, the Parish House hosted the Girls' Friendly Society, the Boys' Industrial Society, and a free kindergarten.

Today, St. Luke's continues to grow and prosper under the direction of priest-in-charge, Reverend Rebecca Barnes. She worked with the parish to establish Cypress House at St. Luke's which offers social services in the greater Scranton area. The parish is dedicated to social justice initiatives and community outreach, and remains an open and welcoming Christian congregation with a tradition of musical excellence.

I am honored to join with Mother Barnes and the entire congregation to celebrate St. Luke's 150th anniversary on Wyoming Avenue. The parish has been an essential part of the Scranton community, providing support and respite for those who need it and an inclusive place for all to gather to worship. May St. Luke's continue to welcome the faithful to its historic building for generations to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE N.E.W. COMMUNITY CLINIC

HON. MIKE GALLAGHER

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. GALLAGHER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the N.E.W. Community Clinic as they celebrate their 50th Anniversary.

The N.E.W. Community Clinic serves Green Bay and the surrounding areas by providing quality, comprehensive and compassionate medical care to those who are underserved in our communities. The N.E.W. Community Clinic's mission is truly remarkable. Since the clinic's start on July 27, 1971, the N.E.W. Community Clinic has partnered with organizations throughout the Green Bay area. Given the exceptional quality care provided to patients, the N.E.W. Community Clinic has been recognized by several healthcare organizations for their work.

Over the last 50 years, the N.E.W. Community Clinic has substantially expanded, both in size and the services provided. In 1975, just 4 short years after their grand opening, N.E.W. Community Clinic gained the endorsement of the Brown County Medical Society and began working closely with all three local hospitals. In 1987, the clinic opened a second location with support from the community through several funding initiatives. Today, the clinic has five locations throughout the Green Bay area where they offer dental care, lead screening, and nutritional programs for individuals who are uninsured and underserved. To better serve the

communities throughout Green Bay, the clinic also takes walk-in appointments, issuing referrals to outside providers or medical facilities, as well as offering pediatric care.

For 50 years, the N.E.W. Community Clinic has upheld its mission of providing the best possible care to the people of Green Bay and Northeastern Wisconsin. Over 80 percent of the N.E.W. clinic patients stated that their immediate health care needs were met through their visit, and 45 percent of those patients stated that the clinic prevented them from going to the emergency room. I commend the very important work does and dedication that the N.E.W. Community Clinic has shown to the Green Bay area and Northeast Wisconsin.

I invite all members of this body to join me in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the N.E.W. Community Clinic. The N.E.W. Community Clinic is a true credit to Northeast Wisconsin and deserving of the highest degree of recognition.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SGT. JOSEPH A. COX, JR.

HON. JIM BANKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. BANKS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sgt. Joseph A. Cox, Jr. of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Four-plus years ago, tragedy struck when, on Sunday, February 12, 2017, Joe died unexpectedly while on duty. Prior to joining law enforcement, Joe was a combat veteran of the United States Marine Corps. Upon returning 10 civilian life, Cox joined the Allen County Sheriffs Department, where he would serve for 19 years.

As a sergeant, Joe served in the Confinement Division, Communications-Dispatch Center, Civil, Warrants, and Patrol Divisions. He was also a member of the Honor Guard, SWAT Team and was handler to his beloved K-9 partner, "Gunny."

In addition to his work in law enforcement, Joe was an active member of his community, the consummate family man and a devout Christian. He was a member of Blackhawk Ministries, where he participated in programs Double Exposure and Marriage Matters. He also volunteered with Juvenile Justice Ministry of Youth For Christ.

Today, we honor Joe's memory by way of the Sgt. Joseph A. Cox, Jr. Memorial Parkway, a roadway serving an area which Joe patrolled for nearly twenty years. This is a testament to Joe and his peerless devotion to his family, community, and country. He is missed dearly, and though he is no longer with us, his legacy of service and selflessness endures.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

RECOGNIZING THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS' 130TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. VAN TAYLOR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. TAYLOR. Madam Speaker, today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Railroad Commission of Texas on its 130th anniversary.

Established in 1891 by the Texas Constitution, the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) was created for the purpose preventing discrimination in railroad charges and establishing reasonable tariffs. As the first regulatory agency created in the State of Texas, their primary responsibility included covering rates and operations of railroads, terminals, wharves and express companies.

In 1917, the Texas Legislature expanded the Commission's authority after declaring pipelines to be common carriers, thereby providing the agency the ability to administer conservation laws related to oil and gas. In March 1919, their jurisdiction would once again increase to include pipeline safety as well as the safety of alternative fuels, natural gas utilities, and the surface mining of coal and uranium.

In the decades which would follow, the RRC's authority evolved to meet the needs of our rapidly growing state. While its rail functions have since been transferred to the Texas Department of Transportation, the Commission's oversight has extended to include not only oil and gas exploration and production, but also pipeline transporters, the natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline industry, natural gas utilities, the LP-gas industry, and coal and uranium surface mining operations.

In recent years, the Commission has modernized technology for increased efficiency and has expanded transparency by providing the public with needed tools to access agency information. Further, the dedicated efforts of its professionals have contributed to the streamlining of operations while promoting increased innovation and energy independence.

For over 130 years the Railroad Commission of Texas has maintained a unified and focused mission of protecting the public, environment, and economy of Texas. As the oil and gas industry continues to be an essential component of Texas' success story, I congratulate the Railroad Commission of Texas and its employees on this milestone anniversary and wish them continued success as they continue to protect the state's natural resources, environment, and public safety.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAIR COLA FOR SENIORS ACT OF 2021

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the Fair COLA for Seniors Act of 2021, which would require using the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E) when calculating cost of living adjustments (COLAs) for federal retirement programs. The proposed index would adjust the benefits pro-

grams such as Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, civil service retirement, military retirement, veterans' pensions and compensations, and other retirement programs.

Current law uses the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which measures costs solely of working individuals—unlike most Social Security beneficiaries. Using CPI-W does not adequately consider the rising expenditures of retirement, such as housing and healthcare costs. This inadequate accounting amounts to an effective decrease in benefits for those who rely on these federal programs. The proposed change will lead to increased COLAs, ensuring that seniors are able to keep up with the rising costs of their real-world expenses.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representatives PINGREE (D-ME), BEATTY (D-OH), FITZPATRICK (R-PA), STRICKLAND (D-WA), MOULTON (D-MA), BOYLE (D-PA), SABLAN (D-MP), NAPOLITANO (D-CA), DEUTCH (D-FL), MCNERNEY (D-CA), MCCOLLUM (D-MN), KILMER (D-WA), BROWN (D-MD), POCAN (D-WI), KUSTER (D-NH), SPEIER (D-CA), ESHOO (D-CA), MOORE (D-WI), and COHEN (D-TN), SIRES (D-NJ), KAPTUR (D-OH), LIEU (D-CA), WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (D-FL) for their support as original cosponsors. I look forward to working with the Chairpersons of the Ways and Means, Veterans' Affairs, Oversight and Reform, and Armed Services Committees to ensure this critical piece of legislation becomes law.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I missed votes due to circumstances beyond my control.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 197.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILLIAM BEAUMONT ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

HON. VERONICA ESCOBAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Ms. ESCOBAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the opening of William Beaumont Army Medical Center in Fort Bliss, Texas.

The William Beaumont Army Medical Center first opened in July 1, 1921 and has since become a major medical asset for the U.S. Army—serving the needs of countless soldiers, veterans, military families, and El Paso residents. Whether through assisting victims of the August 3rd, 2019 domestic terrorist shooting or working day and night during the COVID-19 pandemic, the medical center has always helped our community and continues to be an invaluable resource for El Pasoans.

As the United States Army prepares to open one of the most advanced medical facilities in the country, the El Paso community is thankful for the Army's support and wishes William

Beaumont Army Medical Center the best of luck as it begins its years of service.

Again, I am pleased to recognize the opening of William Beaumont Army Medical Center.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, on June 29, 2021, during debate on H.R. 3005, To direct the Joint Committee on the Library to replace the bust of Roger Brooke Taney in the Old Supreme Court Chamber of the United States Capitol with a bust of Thurgood Marshall to be obtained by the Joint Committee on the Library and to remove certain statues from areas of the United States Capitol which are accessible to the public, to remove all statues of individuals who voluntarily served the Confederate States of America from display in the United States Capitol, and for other purposes, one of my colleagues in the majority argued that she held no responsibility for delays in approving North Carolina's request to replace the Charles Aycock statue, due to the Joint Committee on the Library (JCL) only formally organizing on June 23 for the 117th Congress.

However, this argument left out important context about the series of events related to the JCL this year. As my colleague knows, Democrats have controlled both the House and the Senate since January and at any time could have passed their respective resolutions appointing members to the JCL, allowing it to organize. But it took until April 16 and May 26 for the House and Senate to pass their respective resolutions. Even with those delays, the committee could still have been organized at any point after May 26. Yet it still took nearly a month, until June 23, for the committee to formally organize. Throughout this entire Congress, the Democrats have been in the driver seat of the JCL, despite my colleague's representation otherwise.

It is clear that Democrats have needlessly delayed the work of the JCL. Therefore, as I said in my remarks, if Democrats were truly concerned about the presence of offensive statues in the U.S. Capitol, they might start by being quicker to act on the business of the Joint Committee on the Library.

TRIBUTE TO FORMER ALABAMA CONGRESSMAN SONNY CALLAHAN

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to pay tribute to the memory of one of my closest friends, former Congressman H.L. "Sonny" Callahan, the gentleman from the great state of Alabama, who peacefully passed away on June 25, 2021. Sonny and I became quick friends upon his arrival to Washington in 1985. His humor and zeal for practical jokes were as endearing on Capitol Hill as his ability to forge alliances across the aisle to create effective policy and legislation for the American people.

As colleagues on the Appropriations Committee, Sonny and I traveled the world together, meeting with leaders from Singapore to Argentina to Israel and many nations in between. His gregarious nature was as prevalent during those international meetings as it was at home in the heart of Alabama. Sonny extended genuine kindness and friendship to folks across all walks of life and never lost the staunch work ethic that helped him build a successful trucking business in Alabama. Before being elected to Congress as a registered Republican, Sonny dedicated 12 years to the Alabama state legislature, serving both chambers as a registered Democrat—proving he could get along with leaders of all political persuasions.

I always had great admiration for the fact that Sonny was a Navy Veteran of the Korean War. There was no one he fought harder for in Washington than our veterans and current members of the U.S. Armed Forces. He believed in building a stronger national defense, advocating for better care for our veterans, and reinforcing foreign aid for key allies in the Middle East, especially Israel.

It is one of the greatest honors of my lifetime to have served alongside my friend Sonny for 18 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. As President Abraham Lincoln once wrote, “the better part of one’s life consists of his friendships.” Sonny Callahan is one of the most beloved leaders of Alabama and Washington, D.C., and I will always consider him one of my closest friends. My wife Cynthia and I extend our deepest heartfelt sympathy to the Callahan family and the great wealth of friends he made across the country, and indeed around the globe.

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the INVEST Act.

This bill represents a substantial investment in American infrastructure that will touch every corner of this country.

It will rebuild crumbling highways and bridges, reduce traffic congestion, enhance auto and pedestrian safety, expand transit options, help local governments finance their infrastructure and capital needs, and commit our nation to clean energy future.

I want to thank Chairman DEFAZIO and Chairwoman NORTON for working with me to include in this bill the Metro Accountability and Investment Act (H.R. 694), which helps the federal government meet its financial obligations to the national capital’s transit system.

The bill increases the existing federal commitment to Metro, provides annual operating funds for the first time, and conditions new funding on important accountability and ethics reforms that will strengthen the role and independence of the WMATA Inspector General.

I also welcome the reinstatement of the Build American Bonds program, a direct subsidy bond program that helps municipalities

access financing for infrastructure project and which I have previously championed with my own legislation.

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the senior Texas Member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I strongly support House passage of H.R. 3684, the INVEST in America Act. I inserted numerous provisions into the bill, including one to establish a grants program in the Department of Transportation to develop transportation workforce training programs for workers adversely affected by industry automation, and another to assist communities to retrofit transportation infrastructure that creates obstacles to their mobility and employment opportunities to provide greater transportation equity.

The INVEST in America Act authorizes a tremendous funding boost to our nation’s surface transportation and infrastructure system, providing just under \$550 billion over five years and bringing over \$27 billion to my state of Texas. In addition to highways, roads and bridges, the bill makes a substantive investment in our nation’s transit system as well as our passenger and freight rail system, and makes great strides to improve environmentally friendly policies by encouraging and funding alternative modes of transportation and decreasing traffic congestion to reduce carbon emissions and the harmful effects of climate change. Moreover, according to the Council of Economic Advisors, for every \$1 billion in Federal highway and transit investment, approximately 13,000 well-paying domestic jobs are supported for one year.

With respect to funding for passenger and freight rail, the bill provides a total of \$95 billion in authorized funding, while specifically:

Tripling funding for Amtrak to \$32 billion.

Providing funding for corridor planning and development of high-speed rail projects such as the Texas Central project, a proposed high-speed rail line between Dallas and Houston.

Improving rail safety by addressing highway-rail grade crossings needs, requiring additional rail safety inspectors, addressing trespasser and suicide fatalities, and eliminating gaps in railroad safety.

My congressional district, Texas’ 30th, includes the International Inland Port of Dallas (IIPOD), an intermodal and logistics district that encompasses 7,500 acres and five municipalities while supporting over 17,000 jobs. The Dallas Inland Port is also supported by Union Pacific, who added an intermodal terminal nearly 20 years ago to increase Class I’s Dallas/Ft. Worth container capacity. The Union Pacific Dallas Intermodal Terminal also provides intermodal access to the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

The freight railroads invest \$25 billion per year of their own private money into their networks and are critical partners in efforts to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas

emissions. Given the importance of freight rail, not only to the Inland Port of Dallas but to ports nationwide, I encourage the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to continue to work with the freight railroad industry as the INVEST Act advances towards a House-Senate conference committee.

RECOGNIZING THADDEUS C. SHEEHY, SR. FOR HIS RETIREMENT FROM 25 YEARS OF COACHING MARYLAND’S YOUTH THROUGH CLUB LACROSSE

HON. ANTHONY G. BROWN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. BROWN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Thaddeus C. Sheehy, Sr., upon his retirement from 25 years of coaching Maryland’s youth through club lacrosse.

Coach Sheehy served the community as a dedicated volunteer, coaching Maryland’s sons by not only teaching them the game of lacrosse but also instilling in them life lessons along the way. This commitment to help build character in his players and ensure their growth as leaders also extended to his own family, as Mr. Sheehy coached his three sons, Thaddeus, Jr., Sean, and Liam.

Coach Sheehy, a 1988 graduate of Saint Mary’s Parish High School located in downtown Annapolis, learned the importance of servant leadership through Saint Mary’s varsity lacrosse program. Coach Sheehy took this servant leadership philosophy into the Annapolis Lacrosse Club Bay Raiders, with the mission to help young men get better at the sport they love while giving back to their community and those who protect it.

Francis McAndrews, who coached with Mr. Sheehy for 18 years including his last season as the Face-Off Coach of the Bay Raiders, commended his dedication and skills noting, “Coach Sheehy placed the development of the entire player at the forefront of the team’s priorities. For 18 years I worked alongside him to build leadership through the C-4: character, commitment, confidence, and courage in our young men, and I am proud to call Tad my friend. Tad had a successful style of building character through humor and was known to give each boy on the team a nickname—and very often those nicknames stuck well after their lacrosse careers!” Coach Sheehy could often be heard asking his players—“what have you done for your academics, what have you done for your family, and what have you done for lacrosse today?”

Sheehy coached the Annapolis Lacrosse Club Bay Raiders to be Maryland State Champions in 2015 and helped to take four teams to Anne Arundel County Champions in 2014, 2015 and 2016. He was honored with the Lifetime Achievement in Coaching Award by the Annapolis Lacrosse Club Bay Raiders, while at his last lacrosse tournament on June 20, 2021.

I am honored to recognize Coach Sheehy today for his 25-year commitment to help shape Maryland’s young men and athletes into servant leaders, and for his leading by example through his service to the Annapolis community.

HONORING THE LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE OF BISHOP MICHAEL SHERIDAN

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the leadership and service of Bishop Michael Sheridan in the Diocese of Colorado Springs, Colorado.

When Bishop Sheridan arrived in Colorado Springs from Saint Louis in 2002, the diocese was still considered mission territory. Over the past two decades, Bishop Sheridan has worked tirelessly to ensure that, no matter where they live in the diocese, Catholics are served by a parish and a pastor. Under his leadership, several new parishes were established, and where existing churches were inadequate to serve the growing Catholic population, new ones were built.

More importantly, Bishop Sheridan has overseen a robust vocations program that has attracted many seminarians, resulting in the ordination of new priests nearly every year since 2010.

Bishop Sheridan is also known as an incredibly effective communicator and teacher of the Catholic faith. For over 10 years, he hosted a weekly radio show in which he interviewed a wide variety of Church leaders, theologians, authors, and other experts. This outreach provided an invaluable opportunity for Catholics in Colorado to gain deeper knowledge of the issues facing the church locally and around the world.

Bishop Sheridan is passionate about Catholic education, and he did everything in his power to support and strengthen Catholic schools in the diocese. Notably, he made sure that tuition assistance was available for families who had limited financial resources but wanted a Catholic education for their children. He also worked with local leaders of all faiths to support school choice so that all parents could have access to the best educational options for their children.

Bishop Sheridan has been a strong advocate for the poor and marginalized, and he has never flinched in the face of pressure to abandon or hide our brothers and sisters in need. In one of his most important accomplishments, Bishop Sheridan played an enormous role in the construction of Marian House soup kitchen in 2008, and the adjacent Hanifen Center in 2009. Those two facilities have served hundreds of thousands of people since their opening with meals, emergency aid, employment assistance, and many other services.

Under Bishop Sheridan's leadership, the diocese has also expanded its Respect Life Apostolate, which works to protect life from conception to natural death. This includes supporting mothers in crisis pregnancies with baby items and adoption services, advocating for pro-life legislation on the local and national levels, and working to expand outreach to those who are imprisoned or homebound.

Leaders are also judged by how they manage during difficult times. During his tenure, Bishop Sheridan led the faithful of a church that has been shaken by revelations of past mistakes. He has led during a time when the church is criticized both for defending itself

and for advocating for its beliefs. He also helped navigate the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As Bishop Sheridan embarks on a well-earned retirement, it is my highest privilege to honor and thank him for being a faithful servant to Colorado's Fifth Congressional District.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE GALLAGHER

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. GALLAGHER. Madam Speaker, due to a matter outside of my control, I was unable to participate in Roll Call numbers 193, 194, 195, and 196.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 193; YEA on Roll Call No. 194; NAY on Roll Call No. 195; and YEA on Roll Call No. 196.

IN HONOR OF CAPTAIN ROBERT "BUZZ" BUSWELL AS TENNESSEE'S SECOND DISTRICT VETERAN OF THE MONTH

HON. TIM BURCHETT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Purple Heart recipient and Vietnam War veteran Captain Robert "Buzz" Buswell as Tennessee's Second District Veteran of the Month.

Captain Buswell enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1968 as a first lieutenant. In 1970, his platoon was attacked in Cambodia by enemy forces and he sustained extensive injuries. He was hospitalized for 19 months and received 27 surgeries. He fought for his recovery and even had to relearn how to walk. He retired from the military as a captain in 1972.

Buswell, whose father was a career officer in the U.S. Air Force, met his wife Donna in their high school glee club in New Hampshire. They have a son and a daughter.

Captain Buswell received numerous medals and commendations for his service, including the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with "V" Device, and the Combat Infantryman Badge. Just this year, Buswell was chosen as one of the nation's 2021 Purple Heart Patriot Project honorees.

After his military service, he earned his Master's Degree in education and spent many years serving East Tennessee communities. He worked for the Boys & Girls Club, the Knox County Fire Prevention Bureau, and served as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Hurricane Katrina ombudsman for Knoxville and Knox County. In 2012, when I was mayor, I had the honor of working alongside Buswell when he took the position of Knox County's veteran service officer. He continues that work today as the county's Director of Veteran and Senior Services.

If there's a veteran issue, program or event taking place in East Tennessee, it's almost certain that Buswell is involved. He is an active member in numerous veteran organiza-

tions. These include being a Life Member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Disabled American Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Legion. He helped charter the Vietnam Veterans of America Captain Bill Robinson Chapter 1078. His service to fellow veterans also includes involvement with the Veterans Regional Mental Health Council, Honor Air Knoxville, and Wreaths Across America. Through the United Veterans Council of East Tennessee he established a program serving hundreds of veterans free breakfast on Saturdays.

Captain Buzz Buswell is a true American hero. He sacrificed to protect our country and fight for our freedoms. And he's spent countless hours taking care of fellow veterans, making sure they have the support they need and the recognition they deserve.

I thank him for his service. It's an honor to call him my friend.

HONORING THE CENTENNIAL OF THE GROSSMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. DARRELL ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the centennial of the Grossmont Union High School District, a family of 17 high schools and programs serving more than 20,000 of my constituents in California's 50th Congressional District.

In 1832, Abraham Lincoln said of education: "I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in."

Four score and nine years later, a school district was established in El Cajon, California, with construction on its first school beginning in 1921. This same building is now the Grossmont Union High School District's central office, which serves as an enduring symbol of East San Diego County's commitment to the centrality of education and advancement of every student.

The Grossmont Union High School District takes special and deserved pride in its rich history—now made modern with safe and cutting-edge campuses that support world-class academics. These schools meet the most fundamental mission: Empowering students to take their place as the leaders of tomorrow.

I congratulate Trustees Rob Shield, Elva Salinas, Gary Woods, Jim Kelly, and Christopher Fite, as well as Superintendent Theresa Kemper and the thousands of dedicated educators and workforce that have engaged this most important subject for the past 100 years.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF MR. DALE EDWARD WHITEHEAD

HON. DIANA HARSHBARGER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Dale Edward Whitehead,

who recently lost his battle with lung cancer after spending his life serving his community and his country. Dale graduated from Pennsylvania State University with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Liberal Arts and Sciences before going on to graduate from the University of Maryland, Robert H. Smith School of Business with a Master's Degree in Business Administration. He also attended the United States Defense Language Institute, where he was awarded an Associate of Arts Degree in Arabic.

Dale served as a Cryptologic Arabic Linguist, Sergeant E-5 in the United States Marine Corps from 1999 to 2004. Dale not only honorably served his country in Iraq, he was at the forefront of the search for weapons of mass destruction in Operation Iraqi Freedom. For his brave service, Dale was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (with Combat "V"), the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, the National Defense Service Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation-Navy, and the Marine Corps Rifle Badge (Sharpshooter). After his return from Iraq, Dale worked as a program manager for 6 years for Poole & Associates as well as SAIC. In 2010, Dale joined General Dynamics where he became a Senior Program Manager and ultimately rose to the level of Director.

In 2014, Dale played an important role in Range Generation Next (RGNext) (a joint venture of General Dynamics IT and Raytheon) in bidding and winning the United States Airforce's Launch and Test Range Integrated Services Contract valued at \$2 billion. The contract provided a sole prime contractor responsible for operations, organizational and depot-level maintenance as well as sustainment at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station and Vandenberg Air Force Base. This was a significant and transformational contract which included the engineering support to all Space launch activities. RGNext was awarded this contract in April of 2015, and Dale was subsequently appointed as Deputy Program Manager of the contract. In this role he focused on mission and program leadership, organizational development, new business change proposals, and day to day management activities of the broad contract. Dale excelled in working with people and enjoyed the comradery of building successful teams in the workplace. His RGNext co-workers have shared with me that his constant mentorship helped them professionally and personally and they will forever be better for it.

As a non-smoker and fitness advocate with no family cancer history, it is strongly suspected by his doctors that Dale's terminal lung cancer was most likely due to his exposure to Yellow Cake Uranium and Burn Pit toxicities during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Dale's life underscores the need for the U.S. government to support veterans like him, who have been exposed to dangerous agents in the theatre of war and now face sickness or even death. We must uplift our veterans and honor their sacrifice to our country.

Dale did an outstanding job while here on earth, and he served our country fearlessly. He made a difference in his professional career, and his many co-workers have described him as incredibly personable, a great supportive leader, a wonderful person, and a dependable friend whose love for his family was

always self-evident. I believe one thing Dale had in common with my fellow East Tennesseans was his deep respect for his country that drove him to spend years in service both at home and abroad. Those who had the opportunity to interact with him have shared with me how very friendly and an openly giving person he was and will be remembered for all of eternity as. Dale will forever be cherished as a loving family man to his wife, Erin, and his sons Henry, Nathan, and George. Those who could find a way to describe him in a single short sentence would say he was and will forever always be a patriotic Marine veteran and a loving family man. All those touched by his life are better for knowing him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. KATKO. Madam Speaker, I mistakenly voted on Roll Call No. 202 on June 30, 2021 and would like to correct my vote to a NAY.

HONORING REVEREND CURTIS WEST HARRIS

HON. A. DONALD McEACHIN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. McEACHIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Reverend Curtis West Harris, for whom a post office in my district is being named next week following enactment of H.R. 3847 last year. He was an influential and well-respected member of our community, who fought for social justice all his life.

Reverend Harris was a trailblazer. Born in Dendron, Virginia, on July 1, 1924, Reverend Harris attended Virginia Union University in Richmond and then began work at Allied Chemical in Hopewell. During his time there, Reverend Harris served as a union shop steward and worked to promote diversity by advocating for the employment of African Americans in positions beyond janitors. When met with opposition, Reverend Harris sued Allied Chemical for violating regulations prohibiting discrimination.

Ordained as a Baptist minister in 1959, Reverend Harris continued his fight for social justice. In 1960, he was sentenced to sixty days in jail for staging a sit-in at a segregated drugstore in Hopewell. Reverend Harris was arrested over a dozen times for peaceful protest and civil disobedience.

Reverend Harris joined the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC) national board and would eventually become the leader of the SCLC's Virginia Chapter for over thirty years. During his time with the SCLC, Reverend Harris became one of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s top lieutenants, marching with Dr. King from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. In 1966, Reverend Harris organized a march to fight plans for a landfill in a predominantly Black neighborhood in Hopewell, ultimately coming face to face with the Ku Klux Klan at the steps of the Hopewell City Hall.

In addition to his service with the SCLC, he served in leadership roles for the Hopewell

Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or NAACP, at the Virginia Council on Human Relations, and with numerous organizations.

Reverend Harris was highly respected within his community. He was active in local politics, serving as an elected member of the Hopewell City Council for over 25 years, and eventually as Hopewell's first Black mayor.

Throughout his time in public service, Reverend Harris fought tirelessly for civil rights and educational and environmental justice.

On December 10, 2017, Reverend Curtis Harris died at the age of 93. He was buried in Appomattox Cemetery, which he fought to integrate in 1960.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the life and accomplishments of Reverend Curtis West Harris and in celebrating the renaming of the post office in Hopewell in his honor.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR JOE GROCHMAL

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. NEAL. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Joe Grochmal on entering his 68th year as a golf instructor in western Massachusetts. This milestone achievement deserves the highest praise for Joe's hard work and steadfast love for the game, something he has instilled in the hearts of thousands of students.

Sometimes referred to as the "Godfather of Western Massachusetts Golf," Joe began working as a golf instructor in 1953. Although he frequently changed his teaching philosophy, exploring new techniques to bring the most out of every golfer, Joe consistently shared with his students a genuine appreciation for the game of golf. During a career that spanned nearly seven decades, Joe dedicated countless hours to sharing his knowledge and expertise, meeting golfers young and old at local driving ranges after putting in a full day's work. Joe truly represents the best of Massachusetts' First District, and that is why I am proud to join with his family, friends, and the entire western Massachusetts golf community in recognizing this milestone achievement.

Madam Speaker, I would like to once again acknowledge Joe Grochmal. I am proud of his accomplishments and I wish him many more years of health and happiness, along with many more fairways and greens.

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the INVEST in America Act.

I want to thank Chairman DEFazio for bringing this bill to the floor. I represent the 3rd

congressional district of Virginia where the Chesapeake Bay meets the James, Nansemond, and Elizabeth Rivers. This location presents both challenges and opportunities. My district is home to the Port of Virginia, one of the largest and busiest ports on the eastern seaboard. With 95 percent of our nation's trade moving by water, it is essential that the port is able to maintain operations.

Unfortunately, due to sea level rise, both attributable to climate change as well as historic subsidence, these same waterways also pose a serious risk. State and local elected officials in Virginia already appreciate the significant threat sea level rise poses to Hampton Roads. Unfortunately, the cost to proactively and aggressively address this problem head-on is far too great for any city to bear by itself. While Hampton Roads has already spent considerable sums of money to address the rising water and implement resilient infrastructure where feasible, the scope of the entire project to actually address the problem is expected to total in the billions of dollars.

Hampton Roads is also home to significant traffic backups throughout the region, especially at waterway crossings. The widening of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel is primarily being financed with local and state revenue from sales and gasoline taxes in the Hampton Roads Transportation Fund but it requires federal support. There are limits to how these major transportation projects can move forward without federal assistance. For example, the Downtown and Midtown Tunnels, connecting the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth, were in such a state of disrepair and need of expansion that the Commonwealth had few options other than to enter into a lopsided private-public partnership leading to egregious tolls for decades to come. The Hampton Roads region is also in vital need of public transit investments. Our airports, roads, and bridges are in need of repair and I would urge the committee to commit crucial federal support for infrastructure in every state.

This infrastructure bill includes much needed investments in a cleaner and greener infrastructure. This bill targets investments that will improve energy efficiency and resilience and grow local economies without passing the burden onto local communities.

I am pleased that this bill will also directly impact my district by dedicating nearly \$24 million in critically needed infrastructure funds, so that we can invest in the future of our communities. With these funds the Birthplace of America Trail can expand in Newport News; the City of Chesapeake can begin a pilot program for electric emergency response vehicles; Hampton Roads Transit can move forward with the Bus Rapid Transit project making traveling around Hampton Roads without a car easier; Tidewater Drive, a major arterial road connecting to Naval Station Norfolk, can be repaired; and work on the Craney Island Access Road, which will help keep up with the increased import/export demands at the Port of Virginia, can advance.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes necessary investments that will create good-paying jobs and resilient infrastructure as we face the rising seas and changing climate.

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the following individual staff of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for all their hard work on this important piece of legislation. I'd also like to thank the team at the Office of Legislative Counsel for their assistance in drafting the legislation and the many amendments offered during our Committee Markup and on the House Floor.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT

Helena Zyblikewycz
Jackie Schmitz
Garret Gee
Brittany Lundberg
Chris Bell
Zan Guendert

RAILROADS, PIPELINES, AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Auke Mahar-Piersma
Andrea Wohleber
Frances Bourne
Katherine Ambrose

WATER RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENT

Ryan Seiger
Navis Bermudez
Alexa Williams
Michael Bauman

FULL COMMITTEE

Kathy Dedrick
Jill Harrelson
Alice Koethe
Jamie Harrell
Madeleine Pike
Matt Leasure
Michael Hudspeth

INTERNS

Bethany Abbate
Mateo Alliende
Henry Lininger

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Karen Anderson
Robert Casturo
Jordyn Coad
Kakuti Lin

RECOGNIZING COLONEL WILLIAM C. BENTLEY III

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize those men and women who have served this great Nation with honor—men such as Colonel William C. Bentley III, United States Marine Corps.

Colonel Bentley's long and distinguished career began after graduating from The Citadel and commissioning through the Platoon Leaders Class. From there, a fruitful career as a USMC Helicopter Pilot blossomed. During this career, Colonel Bentley was stationed and deployed across the globe—from Djibouti to Iraq to Europe, Colonel Bentley has seen it all.

In his final command, Colonel Bentley led Marine Corps Installations National Capital

Region-Marine Corps Base Quantico. In this role, I've had the pleasure of witnessing firsthand his passion for the USMC mission. He has assisted me, my staff, and the citizens of Virginia in navigating complex issues with an attention to detail that every public servant should work to emulate.

Colonel Bentley's work ethic, duty to mission, and commitment to servant leadership are without equal. I believe that his personal drive to achieve excellence in his work has and will set a very high standard for his peers. I would also like to thank Colonel Bentley for the service and sacrifice he has made, both for our Nation and our Marine Corps. His impeccable integrity, boundless work ethic, and loyal devotion to duty earned him the respect and admiration of myself, my staff, and the First District of Virginia. In retirement, I have no doubt that Colonel Bentley will continue to serve the Nation honorably and with distinction in whatever path he chooses to pursue.

I wish William and his family the best of luck as they continue their journey together. It was an honor and a pleasure having William serve at Marine Corps Base Quantico. We all can sleep soundly at night knowing that members of our all-volunteer force like William stand ready to defend our country and take the fight to our enemies, far away from their families and the comforts of the United States of America.

I thank Colonel William C. Bentley III, as he has done a fantastic job. Best of luck to him and may God bless him and his family as he moves into this next chapter.

HONORING JAMIE MATHIAS

HON. TOM McCLINTOCK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the passing of one of our great local educators, Jamie Mathias, a Social Sciences teacher within Del Oro High School for 22 years. Jamie's singular goal for students was to encourage each one to better themselves; be that in the classroom or through athletics. Jamie always pushed students to reach their next level and become the person he knew they could be.

Jamie was a father figure, a coach, and a mentor to many students during his time as an educator. His academic impact on our community will be felt for a very long time. The young minds he molded and inspired that are now spread across our county are the living legacy of what a great teacher will leave behind.

Most importantly, Jamie was a family man, devoted to his family and raising his children to be exceptional members of our community. They carry with them the many life lessons that Jamie imparted over the years. My deepest condolences and prayers go out to the Mathias family, especially to his wife and children. I thank Jamie, for his extraordinary impact in our schools, and the countless students he encouraged.

INTRODUCTION OF REMOVING FEDERAL BARRIERS TO OFFER- ING OF MOBILE WAGERS ON IN- DIAN LANDS ACT

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, today, I introduced the Removing Federal Barriers to Offering of Mobile Wagers on Indian Lands Act. Tribal government gaming is the primary source of revenue for hundreds of tribal nations throughout this country who otherwise would not have the basic resources to provide for the health, safety and general welfare of their citizens and others who live on tribal lands. This economic development activity has been key to tribal economies since the United States Supreme Court first affirmed the inherent sovereign right of tribal governments to conduct gaming on their lands in 1987. A year later, in 1988, Congress enacted restrictions on tribal government gaming through the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. This law affirmed the right of tribal governments to conduct gaming on their lands but tried to balance the equities between tribal and state governments when tribes are conducting Las Vegas style gaming.

Not every tribal nation is able to conduct gaming, but for those who are located in viable gaming markets, it has proven to be one of their more successful economic ventures. Many tribal nations have become economic engines in their regions, employing thousands of people and investing tens of millions of dollars into the regional economies on an annual basis.

However, the gaming industry is quickly evolving and more and more states are legalizing some form of gaming activity that primarily utilizes the internet. Sophisticated, well-financed digital companies that did not exist even ten years ago are changing the gaming industry before our eyes. Online sports betting seems to be the popular choice this year for many state legislatures.

As tribal governments begin to prepare to move their gaming activities into the online world, there have been some questions about whether such gaming activities would continue to be primarily governed by the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. The federal law governing tribal gaming was enacted in 1988, prior to the internet being readily available, and the law does not expressly address the internet. As you can imagine, setting up these new gaming systems involves significant financial investments. Tribal governments should not be required to make these investments without having clarity and comfort of what laws will apply to them. For that reason, I am introducing this bill to clarify the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act and make clear what the congressional drafters would have done in 1988 had the internet been around at time. This bill would clarify that for purposes of tribal government gaming, the location of the wager occurs at the location of the server, unless a state and Indian tribe otherwise agree. Making this clarification will keep intact the current system of tribal gaming and eliminate any frivolous litigation. Tribal government gaming has been around for more than 30 years and this bill merely clarifies how that system of gaming should evolve into the internet.

This bill does not authorize any type of internet gaming; that is within the authority of each state to do. All this bill does is clarifies the location of where the wager takes place for purposes of tribal government gaming. It clarifies that internet gaming will be conducted by tribal governments under the same framework that they currently conduct gaming in their physical casinos.

As someone who has long lived in a state with more than 110 federally recognized tribal nations, I have seen firsthand how tribal government gaming has benefitted the tribal nations, their citizens, the surrounding communities and the state government. This bill is merely intended to provide some clarity and comfort as tribal gaming moves into the next frontier of the internet. As the United States Supreme Court confirmed in 1987, tribal governments retained the inherent sovereign right to conduct gaming on their lands. Congress needs to provide the clarification in my bill to ensure that tribal gaming is not relegated to the same fate as Blockbuster, but can move forward and thrive like Netflix in the era of the internet.

CHILD TAX CREDIT

HON. LUCY MCBATH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mrs. MCBATH. Madam Speaker, there is a special place in every parent's heart for summer with our children.

My son, Jordan, used to put on his little cleats and a big hat, and run out onto the field to play TeeBall with his friends on Saturday mornings.

After that, we'd go to the pool to cool off, eat lunch under a shady tree, play in the backyard as day turned to dusk, and read a story together as he drifted off to sleep.

Truly, summer is for hard-working parents to spend time with the little ones they love most. It is for our children to grow and live and play.

And that's why I'm so proud we just passed the Child Tax Credit into law. It means more money in the pockets of middle class families.

Now, over 680,000 families here in Georgia will receive a tax cut, and these credits will lift over 160,000 children out of poverty.

This is more funding for Georgia families to protect our children and lift up our community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHIP ROY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 197; NAY on Roll Call No. 198; NAY on Roll Call No. 199; NAY on Roll Call No. 200; NAY on Roll Call No. 201; YEA on Roll Call No. 202; NAY on Roll Call No. 203; and YEA on Roll Call No. 204.

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUR- FACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JAHANA HAYES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Mrs. HAYES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my opposition to Amendment No. 97/No. 188 of H.R. 3684, the INVEST in America Act.

This amendment was included as part of an en bloc which I supported, however, I do not support this amendment. During my time in Congress I have been an ardent supporter of high-speed rail, building rail capacity and improving existing infrastructure in Connecticut, the Northeast, and across the country. Unfortunately, I do not believe this amendment and the specific compact it seeks to create are the best path forward for rail in my state, the region or the country. The INVEST in America Act presents us with an opportunity to make a once in a generation investment in our transportation systems and infrastructure, and in rail in particular. I am concerned that proposals like this take away from our ability to implement comprehensive, fully vetted plans, that are free of redundancies.

As we look towards the future of rail in the United States, we must be sure that we partner with state and local transit authorities, and stakeholders. We must also be sure to consider and mitigate the climate and environmental risks that stem from these projects.

Congress must advance a bold vision for our Nation's infrastructure, and I look forward to the INVEST in America Act passing the House. I hope the Senate will quickly begin working on this vital issue.

RECOGNIZING BRUCE WARNER'S PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize a distinguished citizen of my state of Oregon. Bruce Warner has spent his life in public service in a significant variety of roles.

Today, Bruce steps down after ten years as Board President of the TriMet Board of Directors, which is my region's major transit district. During that time, he oversaw successful labor negotiations, a commitment to transition to zero-emission buses, the construction of a new light rail line, and the hiring of executives, managers, and employees that reflect the greatest number of people of color in a public agency in Oregon.

His devotion to serving his community is truly exceptional.

He was born in Fork, Washington and raised in Port Angeles. He graduated from the University of Washington in civil engineering, and while he is a Husky fanatic, we have never held that against him. He is an Oregonian not by birth but by heart.

He began his career as a young civil engineer designing parks and culverts before

quickly moving to Portland where he worked for the Army Corp of Engineers. Living far from work in distant South East Portland, Bruce rode a bus to work. He says that experience began shaping his thinking on transportation, equity, land use, and social responsibility. How transportation is provided as a service became part of his life-long critical examination.

He started as a City Engineer for Hillsboro Oregon and then was elevated to the director of Washington County's Land Use and Transportation. Again, ideas of equity, fairness, land use, and transportation continued to churn in his mind.

It came as a shock to many when, as the new director of the Oregon Department of Transportation Region One, he moved headquarters from a suburb to a regional center in downtown Portland. And, he limited employee parking and encouraged the use of transit instead. Transit over traffic. Pretty revolutionary for a leader who oversees freeways and highways to make a land use decision based on transit opportunities and equity for employees and the public.

He took a brief sojourn from ODOT to lead the solid waste efforts at our regional government and because of his tremendous talents, quickly became Metro's Chief Operating Officer.

He was then tapped by the governor and state legislature to lead the Oregon Department of Transportation. His service was remembered as a healing time for the agency with the legislature and closing the urban/rural divide.

He planned on retiring from ODOT, but was recruited to become the director of the Portland Development Commission where he supported small business development programs for communities of color; light rail construction in downtown; and one of his proudest achievements, the creation of affordable housing.

He tried to retire once again, but duty called. He was asked to be the temporary Hillsboro City Manager.

Oregon's governor most recently tapped Bruce to chair the TriMet Board of Directors. Under Bruce's leadership, TriMet built the Orange Line with the stunning Tilikum Crossing and using a historic number of minority certified contractors. Also, under construction currently is the Division Transit Project employing the largest minority contract award in Oregon's history.

During his free time, Bruce serves on boards of the Volunteers of America and Helping Hands, helping people in recovery.

A calming influence, famous for bringing people together, and settling problems, this leader is still trying to retire. It won't surprise me if he is tapped again. But until that time, I thank Bruce Warner.

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUR- FACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for the INVEST Act which fi-

nally, at long last, includes robust funding for roads, bridges, rail, and new incentives to address climate change equity and most importantly job creation. However, I want to clearly state my deep concerns for an amendment adopted by the House, which creates a so-called North Atlantic Rail Interstate Compact to control the development of high-speed rail.

I share the intent of the authors of the amendment to support high-speed rail throughout the Northeast. Connecticut and the Northeast region are home to some of the most densely-populated areas of the country, which are served well by mass transit, and high-speed rail would have significant positive impacts for our region and our nation as a whole. That is why I am proud to support the underlying bill, which triples funding to Amtrak and provides a 500 percent increase in the funding dedicated to improving high speed and passenger rail. The resources provided in the INVEST Act signal an unprecedented opportunity for the New England region, at the state and federal levels, to work together with common purpose to build on the work already being done to expand rail service in the northeast.

I remain concerned, however, about an amendment added to En Bloc No. 1 to establish a North Atlantic Rail compact. While I appreciate the goals of this proposal, I believe that it is duplicative of existing interstate regional rail efforts and short-circuits established cooperative long term rail planning in the region. The North Atlantic Rail compact has as a goal a multi-phase rail development vision for the northeast that includes initial "early action" projects, many of which are already under development, and longer term goals of a cross-Long Island Sound tunnel and a new right of way across the rural communities of eastern Connecticut. Notably, many of these longer term goals reflect previously considered plans for rail expansion in the northeast and contradicts already-completed environmental assessments for existing high-speed rail plans and could cause significant negative environmental impacts in our region.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has already done extensive study on many of the concepts listed in the North Atlantic Rail plan which have been ruled out as part of the Northeast Corridor (NEC) FUTURE comprehensive plan for the route from Washington, D.C. to Boston, Massachusetts. The existing NEC FUTURE plan has taken years of work with stakeholders with thousands of public comments and has met crucial environmental milestones to move forward. As noted by Amtrak in a June 28, 2021 letter to the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee opposing the underlying compact proposal in the amendment, "Amtrak, state DOTs, the NEC Commission and FRA already have the institutional capabilities, the collaborative framework and the requisite rights to advance high-speed and other intercity passenger rail service in New England."

This compact as proposed in the amendment is also duplicative of existing regional rail cooperation between the Northeast Corridor states. The Northeast Corridor Commission and the NEC Future plan has been developed in partnership with state departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, and local communities. In contrast, the NAR has been included as part of this bill without the support of major stakeholders such as the

Connecticut Department of Transportation and without clear plans for oversight, transparency and public engagement that are inherent in existing regional planning efforts and state and federal agencies.

This is a critical flaw, as many of the goals at the core of this compact would occur in and disproportionately impact Connecticut in the near and long term. As an alternative, the underlying bill authorizes expansion of interstate rail compacts that would be competitively approved and funded to develop plans to expand high speed rail through interstate cooperation and coordination. That is the approach that should be taken on this effort, rather than a duplicative organization without the full buy in of critical stakeholders.

I appreciate that there have been significant changes that Chairman DEFazio of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and his professional staff made to the original NAR proposal, including making the North Atlantic Rail into an interstate compact instead of a federally-chartered special purpose entity, and most critically, requiring ratification from each state in order to go into effect in that state. The original proposal would have created an unaccountable federally-chartered entity with control of funds and eminent domain, which the Committee wisely eliminated from the plan. Unfortunately, these improvements still fail to justify the need for an additional interstate compact on top of existing state and regional entities and requires extensive evaluation and review as this bill moves forward.

As the House and Senate come together to finalize the surface transportation reauthorization bill, I will continue to raise these concerns with lead Congressional negotiators. Additionally, I hope that my colleagues consider weighing these impacts against the existing mechanisms which are already in place to create high-speed rail in the Northeast, including NEC FUTURE, and the underlying authority the bill provides to expand cooperative interstate rail compacts. Just last week on June 24, all 18 voting members on the Northeast Corridor Commission unanimously approved the CON-NECT NEC 2035 plan, a 15-year action plan to rebuild the Northeast Corridor, and which could provide \$70 billion in state-of-good repair funds over the next 15 years. The existing framework of the NEC FUTURE already has the organization, funding, environmental safeguards, stakeholder support, and local buy-in to make high-speed rail a reality for our region more quickly and more effectively than the NAR proposal could do.

In closing, despite these concerns, which I believe can and will be addressed in the process and based on the overall historic opportunity that the INVEST Act provides, I will vote in the affirmative to keep this process moving forward.

JUNE 28, 2021.

Hon. PETER DEFazio,
*Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.*

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
*Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure, House of Representa-
tives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN DEFazio AND RANKING MEMBER GRAVES: I am writing to express Amtrak's concerns about reports that the House may include in the INVEST in America Act an amendment that would create a "North Atlantic Rail Compact" (NARC) with

an ostensible charge to construct an ill-defined “North Atlantic Rail Network.” Amtrak is strongly opposed to the adoption of this amendment and the likely negative consequences of such a decision for the Northeast Corridor and the national rail network. Adopting the amendment would establish—without any hearings, committee consideration, studies or opportunity for those impacted by the proposal to be heard—support for an infeasible proposal, previously rejected because of the harm it would do to the environment, by an advocacy group called North Atlantic Rail (NAR) to build a new, up to 225 mph dedicated high-speed rail line between New York City and Boston.

The dedicated high-speed rail line’s route (NAR Alignment) would not follow the existing Northeast Corridor (NEC) alignment that parallels Interstate 95. Instead, it would travel beneath the East River in a new tunnel; cross dense urban sections of Queens and Long Island to Ronkonkoma; turn north to Port Jefferson; traverse the Long Island Sound in a 16-mile tunnel to Stratford, Connecticut; and after passing through New Haven and Hartford, turn east across Eastern Connecticut and Rhode Island to Providence, from which it would follow the existing NEC rail corridor to Boston. Most of the line would be built on elevated viaducts. Extensive portions of the high-speed line would need to be constructed along newly acquired and cleared rights-of-way on which there are no rail lines or existing transportation corridors today.

Building a high-speed rail line along the NAR Alignment was evaluated in the comprehensive, five-year NEC FUTURE planning and environmental review process—and rejected in the Record of Decision (ROD) issued by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in 2017 because of the harm it would cause to the environment, its costs and failure to provide needed investment to the existing NEC. Instead, FRA, eight NEC states, the District of Columbia and Amtrak endorsed a Preferred Alternative that would increase track capacity and speeds along the existing NEC alignment, and build dedicated high-speed tracks parallel to it where warranted, to minimize environmental impacts and benefit all Amtrak and commuter passengers on the NEC rather than just those traveling on high-speed trains.

The prior rejection of the NAR Alignment is not the only crucial fact undisclosed in the cursory description of the NAR Proposal on NAR’s website and in its handouts.

Federal safety regulations governing Tier III (above 186 mph) high-speed rail equipment would preclude the operation of conventional speed (125 mph or less) intercity and commuter trains over any portion of the NAR Alignment. This means that passengers traveling from currently served NEC cities such as Stamford or Bridgeport to Boston would have to change trains to travel on high-speed trains over the NAR Alignment, as would passengers from New London, Springfield, and Northern New England. It also means that New York City-to-Boston trains would not be able to operate above 160 mph—which will soon be the maximum speed between New York City and Boston—over the NAR Alignment until the entire line was completed, which NAR acknowledges would be decades away.

While NAR’s advocates claim that the NAR HSR Line would cost \$84.6 billion, and

“Early Action Projects” (investments in other New England rail corridors) an additional \$23.4 billion, they have not provided any engineering or cost study to substantiate those figures.

Building a new 240-mile high-speed rail line, much of it through heavily populated areas where there is no existing rail line or right-of-way, would require purchasing or condemning innumerable homes and businesses, and routing the line through parks and wetlands. Maps prepared for the NEC Future study indicate that the least intrusive route along the NAR Alignment would:

Bisect Forest Park in Queens on a viaduct, and travel in a trench through Eisenhower County Park in Nassau;

Be built on trenches or viaducts through residential neighborhoods and business districts alongside the Long Island Rail Road’s heavily traveled Main, Hempstead and Ronkonkoma Lines (on which service would have to be curtailed during construction); and

Follow new alignments, primarily on viaducts, between Ronkonkoma and Port Jefferson, and through numerous communities, parks and wetlands between Hartford and Providence.

While the “Early Action Projects” listed on NAR’s website are all worthwhile projects, they are not new ideas and have no connection to NAR’s high-speed line proposal. In fact, most of them would not connect with a high-speed line built along the NAR Alignment. The massive levels of funding it would consume would make it less likely that these projects would be funded.

Likewise, a federal funding commitment to the NAR Alignment—which would cost more than the Biden Administration’s proposed investment in all passenger rail projects throughout the country—would leave little federal funding available for projects in other regions.

The amendment would give NARC, the Compact it creates, responsibility for planning and constructing the New York City-to-Boston high-speed rail line. NARC would be tasked with planning other New England passenger rail improvement projects, a responsibility currently held by FRA, the states, the NEC Commission and Amtrak. NARC would gain these important and complex responsibilities once only two of the seven New England states ratified the compact creating it, even though it would have no resources or employees at that time. It would be governed by an unwieldy 17-member Board on which the federal government and each NEC state would have the same number of votes (two) on issues relating to the construction of a federally-funded high-speed rail line from New York City to Boston as Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Oddly, the amendment would not give NARC the legal authority possessed by Amtrak and states to condemn properties necessary for the construction of the NAR Alignment, or the remedies Amtrak has if freight railroads that own rail lines on which Early Action Projects would be constructed decline to allow those projects.

Amtrak recognizes that the advocates for the NAR proposal are well-intentioned. We share their vision of faster service between New York City and Boston, where Amtrak carries more travelers than all airlines combined despite inadequate infrastructure and

investment that makes the trip on Acela 45 minutes longer than traveling the same distance from New York City to Washington. The best way to accomplish that is to advance the series of investments contemplated by NEC Future, which will produce near-term benefits—shorter trip times and more trains—for all NEC rail users as each project is completed.

Fifty years after the creation of Amtrak, the stars are finally aligning in ways that would provide New England with the improved and expanded high-speed, intercity and commuter service it needs and deserves. For the first time in Amtrak’s history, we have an Administration, a Congress and multiple New England state partners who support making the types of investments other countries have made to develop world class passenger rail services. Because of climate change, an unprecedented pandemic, a growing population, and increasing congestion in other modes, the need for investments in passenger rail service to provide mobility, reduce emissions and spur an economic recovery has never been greater. Amtrak and our state partners stand ready to seize that opportunity.

Two months ago, I testified before your committee to urge support for investments to reduce trip times between New York City and Boston to less than two hours and thirty minutes. Amtrak and our New England state partners along the NEC are about to begin one of the most important steps in that process: a study to evaluate alternative alignments—including their environmental and community impacts—for increased capacity and higher speeds between New Haven and Providence to identify a Preferred Alternative, as contemplated by the NEC FUTURE ROD. The NEC Commission is about to release its CONNECT NEC 2035 report, a 15-year roadmap for implementing NEC FUTURE’s vision for expanded and faster passenger rail service. In April, we released our “Amtrak Connects US” vision that would provide or expand Amtrak service, also over a 15-year time period, on the same intercity corridors off the NEC Main Line that are included in the NAR’s list of “Early Action Projects.”

Amtrak, state DOTs, the NEC Commission and FRA already have the institutional capabilities, the collaborative framework and the requisite rights to advance high-speed and other intercity passenger rail service in New England. Right now would be the worst possible time to throw a monkey wrench into the progress they are making by creating a new bureaucracy with poorly defined and overlapping aims and yet no institutional capability. Continuing to move forward with the NEC FUTURE investment program, which has already received Tier I environmental clearance, and advancing the “Amtrak Connects US” vision and state rail plans, offer the best, fastest, most cost-effective and most environmentally responsible path to achieving the improved and expanded high-speed, intercity passenger and commuter rail service that residents of New England expect and deserve.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. FLYNN,
Chief Executive Officer, Amtrak.